

ANACONDA TIMES

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Theater dedicated to fallen Soldiers

By Pfc. Leah R. Burton
Anaconda Times
staff writer

Col. James E. Chambers, 13th Corps Support Command commander, and Brig. Gen. F.C. Williams, 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing commander, unveiled a bronze plaque engraved with the names of seven 3rd COSCOM Soldiers at the Sustainer Theater dedication ceremony May 4.

The indoor theater, which is still the only venue in Iraq or Kuwait to show first run films, was dedicated in memory of Sgt. 1st Class Kelly Bolor, Staff Sgt. Craig Davis, Sgt. Roger D. Rowe, Spc. Ryan G. Carlock, Spc. Luke P. Frist, Spc. Ramone Reyes-Torres and Pfc. Jesse D. Mizener who were killed in action in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom I.

"As we gather to formally dedicate the Sustainer Theater to seven of our fallen comrades, we are reminded once again how difficult and dangerous those tasks are, that

the cost of liberty is high and that freedom does not come cheap," said Chambers.

Bolor, 37, a supply specialist with the 137th Quartermaster Company, died Nov. 15, 2003, when two 101st Airborne Division UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters crashed in Mosul, Iraq.

Davis, 37, was assigned with Fort Polk's 603rd Transportation Company of the 142nd Corps Support Battalion. He died Jan. 8, 2004, when a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter crashed near Fallujah, Iraq, during a medical evacuation.

Rowe, 54, was serving with the 1174th Transportation Company out of Columbia, Tenn., when he was killed by a sniper near Baghdad, Iraq, July 9, 2003.

Carlock, 25, died Sept. 9, 2003, of injuries sustained when his fuel truck came under enemy attack. He was stationed at Hunter Army Airfield, Ga.

Frist, 20, was serving with the 209th Quartermaster Company when his convoy was struck by an improvised explosive device in



PHOTO BY PFC LEAH R. BURTON

Col. (P) James E. Chambers, 13th COSCOM commander, and Brig. Gen. F.C. Williams, 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing commander, unveiled a bronze plaque engraved with the names of seven 3rd COSCOM Soldiers at the Sustainer Theater dedication ceremony May 4.

Baghdad. He died Jan. 5, 2004.

Reyes-Torres, 29, was assigned to the 432nd Transportation Company when he was killed July 16, 2003, in a rocket-propelled grenade attack in Baghdad as he sought cover

from a passing truck that contained a command detonated device.

Mizener, 24, was serving with the 542nd Maintenance Company

see THEATER, page 6

Troops remembered, respected by unit

By Pfc. Abel Trevino
Anaconda Times staff writer

Staff Sgt. Oscar D. Medina, Spc. Ramon C. Ojeda, both of Company A, were tragically killed in action when their convoy was ambushed on May 1.

They gave all they had for their country and fellow soldiers of the 84th Combat Engineer Battalion (Heavy), out of Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, who remembered their two lost Soldiers with heavy hearts.

Twenty-two year old Ojeda, left behind a wife and son whom he cherished.

"He emailed his wife every night; he tried to call daily to hear his son," said Pfc. Carlos R. Roman, a generator mechanic and Ojeda's best friend. "All he ever talked about was home, his wife and his son."

It was no secret that Ojeda was a family-centered man.

"Ojeda was a great man, a dedicated father, and a good friend," Spc. Shawn Manes said. "He was always concerned about his son and wife. His life revolved around his family, especially his son."

Although he would give his all for his family,

Ojeda dedicated himself to those around him.

"He was the kind of guy, he'd give you the shirt of his back," Manes said.

The selflessness of Ojeda was known throughout those who knew him.

"He'd give anything he had. If he had it, he'd give it to you no questions asked," said Pfc. James David Jackson.

The generosity of Ojeda was shown in how he treated people.

"Sometimes, when he knew someone didn't have any money, he'd take them out to lunch and pay for them. He never expected anyone to pay him back, and if you tried to he wouldn't take it," Roman said.

Roman vividly remembers meeting Ojeda. It was Roman's first day with the unit, and Ojeda introduced himself to him and took him out to lunch. Ever since, they were always together.

"He was like my brother," Roman said, "He was a fun loving guy."

Ojeda had a reputation for being a joker.

"He was one of those people you wanted around you because he always made you laugh," Roman said. "He was never in a bad mood, he'd run around with a water gun squirt-



PHOTO BY PFC ABEL TREVINO

Boots and rifles stand at attention above photographs remembering Staff Sgt. Oscar D. Medina and Spc. Ramon C. Ojeda, both of Company A, 84th Engineer Combat Battalion (Heavy).

see FALLEN, page 6

Five receive medical aid after attack

By Pfc. Abel Trevino
Anaconda Times staff writer

Filipino employees on LSA Anaconda were pushed to the forefront of the minds of those who live and work behind the wire.

A mortar attack, a daily event for those accustomed to living here, on May 11 resulted in the death of two Filipino workers and an unknown number of injured. For many of the workers, it was the straw that broke the camel's back, said Ronaldo Dayao, a carpenter for Prime Projects International.

Dayao was one of the five Filipino employees taken to the 31st Combat Support Hospital that night for treatment as a result of the attack. Dayao was in serious condition as a result of indirect fire that killed another PPI employee on contact.

Capt. Edwin S. Maniulit, an operating room nurse with the 31st CSH, said that on the night of that particular mortar attack, there were two deaths and three injuries that came through their facilities.

Two of the injuries were serious, requiring one of the patients to be transferred to Baghdad for more in-depth treatment. The third injury was considered minor.

Part of the daily risk of working in a combat zone is the possibility of injury or death.

"By working here, they are making the same sacrifices we do, they are risking their lives," said Capt. John Palazzolo, an operating room nurse with the 801st CSH.

Dayao commented that the sacrifices being made by civilian employees on LSA Anaconda do not go unnoticed by military personnel.

"[Civilian employees] get the exact same quality care as everybody. There's nothing we do different for anyone," Palazzolo said.

Dayao, still recovering from his injuries, said that he had no complaints in the hospital and the staff was very attentive.

"[The injured workers] received excellent care, just like everybody. We treat everybody the same, Anti-Coalition forces, military, civilians, everybody gets treated the same way," Maniulit said.



PHOTO BY PFC. ABEL TREVINO
 Teiesita Tolontino, a Prime Projects International employee, who works at the laundry facility, has no plans to leave despite some of her coworkers leaving LSA Anaconda. She has been employee here since Jan. 8, and said she felt safe, confident and that the Army is doing what it can to protect everyone.

Although money is not an issue, Dayao still has underlying concerns about certain financial problems he might run into. He commented that he was uncertain, when he returns to the Philippines for continued treatment and recovery, whether his company would continue to pay his medical bills.

The Filipino employees seemed upset but do not blame their problems on the Army.

"The Filipino's, and the way they are being treated, they don't blame it on us," Maniulit said.

The sub-contracted jobs the employees perform for the post are vital for the daily mission.

"It's sad [the employees are leaving] because we need them, we really need them," Maniulit said.

Despite his injuries, Dayao said that after he recovers he wouldn't mind coming back here to work.



Gloria Nacahito, a Filipino contract worker at the PPI laundry facility, has been at LSA Anaconda for four months and has no plans to leave.

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COMMENTARY

Children's eyes speak a thousand words

By Capt. Sven Olson
and Maj. Scott Farish
special to *Anaconda Times*

The 82nd Rear Operations Center of the Oregon Army National Guard and other members from the 852nd Rear Area Operations Center from Arizona had long been anticipating a humanitarian mission to several schools and villages outside LSA Anaconda.

Preparations were made for the delivery of school supplies, computers, personal hygiene items and of course, candy. The mission Officer in Charge, Maj. Mark Shull, delivered the mission brief. Security was paramount. Personnel were identified for both convoy security and site security. The planning was thorough and effective, as the mission was accomplished with no problems, and gained many bright smiles



Many Iraqi schools are without supplies, but generous donations from U.S. representatives bring smiles to the faces of some children.

from the children and families of the Iraqi villages.

In the Shiite village of Al Hatimah the Soldiers, delivered to the local high school, three Compaq laptops donated by a business in Beaverton, Ore. The American Red Cross Youth Group SHAPE program and The Girl Scouts of America donated many of the other materials for this event. The service members accepted all of the kind words and joy from these people but it was the contributing organizations that really put the smile on their faces.

The entire office full of teachers stood back, overwhelmed. The school administrators and teachers were also presented with school supplies, including paper, pens, pencils and English textbooks. All of these items are in short supply over here and anything goes a long way. They were sincerely grateful for the gifts. Several of the Soldiers took the time to begin teaching the eager students a few English words.

The young children tried so hard to talk and communicate. They liked the gifts but they really liked to speak English. They got so excited when they were understood and given just the smallest bit of praise for their efforts.

The second village was a Sunni village named Al Shabab. Very few Americans other than Shull had visited this village. Many of the villagers recognized him and called him by name. From all parts of the village the calls of "Maj. Shull good" rang out with their thumbs high in the air. Shull hired many people from these villages to assist with projects on LSA Anaconda so his name was well known all around the local villages.



An Iraqi schoolgirl speaks a thousand words with her gaze during a recent visit from Soldiers.

Outside the school more school supplies were given away. The people were so happy to have something to use in the classroom to teach the eager students. The process started all over again as they all attempted to show us that they could speak English.

Using the school as the delivery point, many other items were given to the Iraqi people. These included but were not limited to; personal hygiene items like shaving cream and razors and deodorant to the men.

The women received lotions and shampoos and the few tooth brushes and tubes of toothpaste on hand were prized possessions.

The children, as they would anywhere, went crazy for candy. Finding the little ones in the crowd was such fun for the Soldiers. The children's smiles were electric and one

could read the happiness in their eyes. The gifts and candy and excitement of the visit had the villagers singing and dancing.

During these moments of jubilation, it was easy to see they appreciated the kindness. They loved the attention. They smiled when the Soldiers smiled. They waved when the Soldiers waved. Hearts of need and hearts of pride, the Iraqi people wanted to enjoy the things given. They wanted to know more about the United States.

As one interpreter said, "We have been lied to about the Americans, now we want to know the truth."

Over time the things remembered will be the people. The children. The way they came with open arms, in need, but not of a hand out, but for a hand up and a way they could start to rebuild their proud nation full of proud people.

Wardogs lives 'of the troops for the troops'

Courtesy of
362nd Military Police Detachment

In the TV show *Law and Order*, viewers see a case from the commission of a crime through a court conviction in 60 minutes or less. LSA Anaconda has its very own version of *Law and Order*, courtesy of the 362nd Military Police Detachment (Law and Order).

Although the detachment does not handle the prosecution aspect of crimes, it handles just about everything else. The 362nd MP Det. provides base support operations to LSA Anaconda. The Army Reserve unit from Ashley, Pa. operates in direct support of the 13th COSCOM as the police force for the installation.

The detachment has sections including Patrol, Traffic, Military Police Investigations, Force Protection as well as Control and Operations.

Patrol is the detachment's most visible section. These soldiers are out on the streets of LSA Anaconda daily in their white non-tactical vehicles, marked Military Police. The section's Soldiers enforce both the Uniform Code of Military Justice and the policies established by the theater and post commanders.

The Traffic section is responsible for maintaining the traffic control patterns, investigating traffic accidents and enforcing traffic policy. The Military Police Investigations section handles investigations of reported UCMJ violations.

Advising the command on barrier plans, Soldier safety issues and physical security measures is the mission of the Force Protection section of the detachment. The desk sergeants come from the Control section and handle all incoming phone calls and public services at the Emergency Response Center.

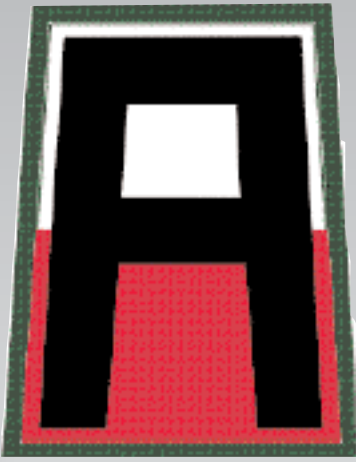
The LSA Anaconda Provost Marshal and his

staff make up the Operations section of the detachment.

The detachment was activated in November 2003 and is made up of citizen soldiers who put their civilian law enforcement and other professional backgrounds to use in their military service. The detachment's soldiers believe in the Military Police Regiment's motto "Of the Troops, For the Troops."

"In the words of an old first sergeant of mine, do the right thing even when no one is watching," said 1st Sgt. Vernon Perry, the unit first sergeant. The detachment is on LSA Anaconda to serve the population and is happy to assist all residents. Flag down any detachment NTV or stop by the ERC for assistance.

The ERC is located at the corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and Eagle Drive. The desk sergeant's phone number is 550-0557 or 550-0559.



Left Shoulder Diary 1st U.S. Army

Compiled from
Unit History

The 1st United States Army shoulder sleeve insignia is characterized by a one-eighth of an inch Army green border enclosing a background equally divided horizontally with white and red, three and one-fourth inches in height and two and one-half inches in width at the base. The top is two and one-eighth inches in width. A black block letter "A," two and three-fourths inches in height, two inches in width at the base and one and five-eighths of an inch at the top.

The red and white of the background are the same colors used in flags for Armies. The letter "A" represents "Army" and is also the first letter of the alphabet suggesting "1st Army."

The Commanding General, American Expedition Force, approved the insignia Nov. 16, 1918, and the War Department approved it May 27, 1922. The background was added on Nov. 17, 1950.

General John J. (Blackjack) Pershing was commanding when 1st Army was formed in France Aug. 10, 1918. From its formation to the present, 1st Army has engaged in many major operations, from reducing the St. Mihiel salient, east of Verdun to landing on Omaha and Utah beaches in Normandy on D-Day.

Civilian of the Week

Sumi McCargo, a civilian budget analyst with the Combined Joint Task Force-7 in support of the 13th Corps Support Command, was awarded the Commanders Award for a job well done.

Hailing from Fort Sill, Okla., McCargo, who has worked in civil service for 26 years, volunteered to come to Iraq with her unit.

"I volunteered to come out here because I've worked with Soldiers for 26 years and I love every single one of them and support them. I wanted to prove I'd support them anywhere, even if it meant coming out here to Iraq," McCargo said.

After five months of being stationed at LSA Anaconda, McCargo will get to return to her husband and four children.



Sumi McCargo

Legendary camel spider: myth vs fact

By Capt. Susan
A. Romano
407th AEG PAO

Myth: The camel spider can reach speeds of 25 mph.

Fact: They are the fastest for a non-flying arthropod but can only reach about 10 mph.

Myth: They will eat your face off.

Fact: Camel spiders eat small desert arthropods like crickets and pillbugs and are a predator

of deadly scorpions. They are not flesh eaters.

Myth: They can eat the stomach out of dead camel.

Fact: They use camel hair to line their burrow when they are about to lay eggs, using their pinchers to clip the hair from the camel's corpse. Additionally, dead camels are covered with flies and that is a good meal for the spider's voracious appetite.

Myth: They will chase you down.

Fact: Camel spiders are very shy and secretive. The myth could stem from the fact that these solifugids -- meaning fleeing from the sun -- avoid hot patches of sun and they will run from shadow to shadow, even if the shadow is made by a human.

Myth: Their bite can kill you.

Fact: Camel spiders have no venom glands. Studies show that the only risk of injury from them is caused by shock or an infection following a rare bite.

Airmen assume new roles in combat

By Chief Master Sgt.
Edmond Lubbers
732nd EMSG

Although the day has just barely begun on LSA Anaconda in the middle of the Sunni Triangle, it is already a flurry of activity.

Under the most watchful eye of the convoy commander, the Airmen carefully position vehicles and make final preparations for a convoy to a classified location. Convoys are normal throughout Iraq; however, it is unusual that Army and Air Force personnel are assigned to the same unit, working shoulder to shoulder, to accomplish DoD missions in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"Today's mission is to conduct an engineering site survey necessary to improve the roads and shower systems throughout an installation," said Air Force Staff Sgt. Tonya Sexton, an engineering assistant assigned to the construction management section.

Sexton went on to say that performing engineering missions in Iraq while assigned to an Army unit has been a career broadening and rewarding experience.

Her supervisor, Maj. Darrel Stokes agrees. "We have not just integrated Air Force personnel into an Army unit; we have significantly

expanded mission capability by merging Air Force and Army active duty along with both Guard and Reserve personnel. It has become clear that the section's diversity has made the unit better equipped to get the job done."

"We are certainly pleased with the initial success of standing up Air Force units within the Army," said Col. Gary Shick, 732nd Expeditionary Mission Support Group Commander.

"Under the 732nd EMSG, the Air Force has deployed numerous teams to include nine engineering teams, four truck companies, and one fuels team in support of the Army. The Air Force and Army units certainly have complimented each other well and their list of accomplishments has been growing fast. But it takes quality up front preparation to render our Airmen fully mission capable," Shick said.

First Lt. T.J. Fryer, an actions officer assigned to the 732nd EMSG Rear Cell located in Southwest Asia said, "Our job is to train, equip and prepare Air Force personnel for their new Army mission."

"I work with a team of Army, Air Force, civilian contractors to process the incoming teams through a rigorous 16-day training schedule that includes live-fire convoy training. After receiving the training, the teams go through a validation process to ensure they are totally ready to forward deploy into Iraq," Fryer said.

Convoy ingenuity

From monster garage to factory install

By Pfc. Abel Trevino
Anaconda Times staff writer

Daily dangers are faced and fought on the roads of Iraq. At the forefront of these battles are the military truck drivers delivering food and other vital supplies to stations.

Improvised explosive devices, small arms fire, and rocket-propelled grenades are just a few of the attacks these brave men and women face. To combat these hostilities, Soldiers, sailors and civilians are helping to install and upload the vehicles going across the wire with various forms of armor.

Stationed here at LSA Anaconda are Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Mike Summers and Petty Officer 3rd Class Fred Thornton from the United States Navy Petroleum, Oils, and Lubricants Support. Skilled as welders, the two men upload armor at the Skunk Works, an area of the 7th Transportation Battalion that specializes in custom armoring vehicles.

"The hardest part is that its time-consuming, everything is done from scratch," Summers said. "We make [the armor], but we still have to fit them to each vehicle. No two vehicles are the same."

Skunk Works does not limit its armoring capabilities to doors and side panels, Summers said, anything that a unit requests that they

are capable of they'll try and fit on a vehicle. A lot of requests are for things such as mounted ammo boxes, modified gun boxes, tire racks, and "wire-catchers," a pole mounted to catch and cut wires strung across the roads.

"We can pretty much make anything fit any vehicle, just give us a little time and the materials we need and we're good to go," Summers said.

Modifications to the vehicles does not limit itself to original custom armor designed by Skunk Works, they can also modify their customizations to fit onto the armoring kits supplied by the Army Materials Command, Summers said.

"The AMC armor is a good armor plate," Spc. Bernard J. Cesmat of the 1742nd Transportation Company and Skunk Works project said. "The one thing we did with our design was we made the rear doors suicide [style]. If you pull up on a location, and you both get out on the same side, you have armor plate in front of you and behind you, also with all your gear on, you can just roll out of there and not get hung up on anything."

After the modifications, the vehicle is essentially the same, just more secure.

"We don't want to change the aesthetics on the inside, we want to give them the same products they brought us, just better than what they had," said Thornton.

Not only are their products aesthetically pleasing by the exterior mounted armor, they're also geared towards being practical and safer.

"The plates that we put underneath [vehicles] won't come up, the plate will fall off and take the blast with it," said Summers. "It's not permanent, it's not factory armor, but it works and [units] are happy with it."

"It's not our mission here, but the Army has found a way for us to use our skills that the Navy has trained us on, to help wherever we're needed," Summers said.

These design modifications have proven to be effective.

"We have had a few companies, especially with the upsurge with the insurgency here in the last couple of weeks, who have unfortunately taken hostile fire or hit IEDs and it has done a good job protecting people," said Cesmat. "We had a HMMWV hit an anti-tank mine and everyone lived because of the way we design our stuff."

Units who have used the armor are appreciative.

"The guys out there love what we do," said Summers, "and we'll do any little thing that we can do to help them. It's time consuming, but they're out there riding around."

The dangers of the supply routes are ever present, but with dedicated people such as the workers at Skunk Works determined to safely armor up vehicles to complete their mission, the risk of life and limb is lessened.



PHOTOS BY PFC. ABEL TREVINO
 Spc. Bernard S. Cesmat of the 1742nd Transportation Company, stands in front of a Skunk Works unique door design.



Petty Officer 2nd Class Mike Summers welds additional supports onto the side armor of a 5-ton truck.

AROUND THE SERVICES

Medics provide multifaceted care

Medical technicians at Camp Sather, Iraq, are perfecting the art of multitasking.

Although they receive initial training in a variety of jobs, at a home base the technicians are usually only assigned one job at a time, said Master Sgt. Bill Wnek, the 447th Expeditionary Medical Squadron's nursing services superintendent.

The technicians' jobs include: emergency room and trauma-ward duties, ambulance response service, aeromedical evacuations, immunizations program, X-ray duties, pharmaceutical dispensing, laboratory work, maintaining medical records and managing blood supplies.

"In a combat environment, we don't have the luxury of staying within our specialties — we need to branch out and help everywhere we can," Wnek said.

The squadron is a basic medical facility with limited room for inpatient care, he said. Normally, the facility functions as a stabilization and medical evacuation center for seriously injured patients.

However, during mass casualty incidents the squadron accepts overflow patients from other

medical facilities in the area, Sergeant Wnek said.

"We expand our care facilities and bring everyone in to work when that happens," he said.

Although the medical technicians are performing tasks smoothly, it does not mean it is easy, said Staff Sgt. Restie Mangiliman, a 447th EMEDS medical technician.

"At first it was kind of hard because at (Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif.) all I do is patient care," he said. "Here, we do a whole bunch of duties. So we train each other when there is time, and we practice on unfamiliar equipment before we have to use it."

Performing ambulance services is one area of immediate concern for training when a new rotation of medical technicians arrive, said Tech. Sgt. Sterling Castillo, a 447th EMEDS independent-duty medical technician.

Because response times have to be quick when people's lives are at stake, trainers familiarize medical technicians on locations they are responsible for, and they train them on radio procedures and basic emergency-care duties, Castillo said.

American Forces Press Service

New commands in Iraq replacing combined joint task force

Two new military commands stood up in Iraq May 15, replacing the current coalition military organization. Multinational Corps Iraq and Multinational Force Iraq will replace Combined Joint Task Force-7.

Coalition military spokesman Army Brig. Gen. Mark Kimmitt, at a Baghdad news conference May 14, said the change addresses a concern that a combined joint task force headquarters was not sufficient to handle the military workload in Iraq efficiently.

"It's certainly more than a formality," he said. "It is trying to get the proper command structure for the days, weeks and months ahead."

General Kimmitt explained that Multinational Corps Iraq will focus on the tactical fight — the day-to-day military operations and the maneuvering of the six multinational divisions on the ground. Army Lt. Gen. Thomas F. Metz will command the corps.

Meanwhile, Multinational Force Iraq will focus on more strategic aspects of the military presence in Iraq, such as talking with sheiks and political leaders, and on training, equipping and

THEATER, continued from page 1

when a mortar round hit Logistics Base Seitz. He died Jan. 7, 2004.

Now when Soldiers take time out of their busy schedules to enjoy a movie at the Sustainer Theater, they will forever be reminded of the

seven Soldiers whose names are etched in bronze in the lobby.

"You see a move for a few hours; you forget you're in Iraq. You relax. And it gives you something to talk to your family about when you call home, because we're seeing the same movies they are," said Lt. Col. Bob Parker, 13th COSCOM G-6.

"Long after the U.S. Army has gone, and this theater is returned to the people of the surrounding area, they will be reminded of the sacrifices made so that they could relax and enjoy a movie, not as a few hours of rest in a difficult and dangerous environment, but rather any time they choose in a safe, secure and democratic nation," Chambers said.

FALLEN, continued from page 1

ing people at night."

Manes remembers that he used to drive the "Screaming Demon," his contact truck, around squealing its tires and trying to get it stuck in the mud, making as much noise as possible, just to get people to laugh.

Although Ojeda was fun loving, he was conscientious as well.

"I remember that at the end of the day he was always the dirtiest person. He was a hard worker and it showed," said Jackson.

On several occasions, when Roman would have to attend a generator at midnight, Ojeda would go out in the field and help him, even if all he did was stand out there and hold a flashlight.

"He always up with a dirty uniform because he was always working. He was the hardest worker in the platoon," Roman said. "He'd always help out, even if it wasn't his job."

Ojeda had a reputation for being the hardest worker and the first one to volunteer to help, said Manes.

"He loved his job," he said.

The love for his job, his camaraderie and loyalty to his unit, were

why he volunteered to come to Iraq.

"He didn't even have to come to Iraq," Roman said. "He had to sign a waiver to come. He knew there was a lot of work in his department to be done here, so he volunteered to come. He wanted to do his part. He was the best at the job, he was better than anyone, so he came to do his part."

The 84th will mourn his loss for a long time.

"I miss him," Roman said, "everybody is going to miss him."

Staff Sgt. Oscar D. Medina, 32 years old, is survived by his wife and son.

"He was exactly what an NCO should be," said Manes. "He protected his Soldiers and wouldn't hesitate at all to do anything for them. He wasn't just a sergeant, he lived as an NCO. He really took care of the Soldiers."

By protecting and looking out for his Soldiers, Medina took a lot of flack.

"I remember I got in a little bit of trouble and he was the first person to stand up for me," Jackson said.

"He used to protect us, and he wouldn't let anyone mess with us," said Roman. "Anyone but him."

Medina left a positive impact on Manes from the moment they first met each other.

"The first day I was at the unit I met him. The rest of the unit was in the field, and he wasn't there but 10 or 15 mins, and he stripped down and put on his coverall and just got down and dirty and worked with me. He was the first shop foreman I'd ever met that would get down and do the work with us," Manes said. "He didn't care about rank when it came to the job; he was a good worker."

Medina maintained a strong work ethic, but still found time to partake in one of his favorite pastimes: playing practical jokes, especially on officers new to the unit, said Sgt. Eugene Smith, Medina's bunkmate and close friend.

"He once convinced a lieutenant that the air brakes in his humvee were bad," Manes said. "All day long, the LT was kicking and cussing trying to find the person that was supposed to check and fix his air brakes for his humvee."

The punchline, of course, was that humvees do not have air brakes.

Medina wasn't all prankster. He managed to develop his hobby of

motorcycles and even placed fourth in a bike show before he deployed to Iraq.

"He was always talking about his bikes," Manes said, "he loved his bikes."

The enthusiasm was so great he shared his love of motorcycles with his friends.

"He was going to put me a bike together so we could ride around the island," Smith said. "We were just going to cruise around and relax."

Medina did not limit his fondness for the machines to the men in his unit. He shared his knowledge and experience with everyone.

"[Staff] Sergeant Medina was a good guy. He took my daughter out a few time for rides on his bikes," Jackson said.

These men, Ojeda and Medina, were Soldiers, not just Soldiers but unique individuals who touched the lives of those around them.

"We're all proud of them," Roman said. "They were brave, brave men."

The lives these two Soldiers affected, and the memories of how they affected them, will be cherished by those who mourn for them.

AROUND THE SERVICES

fielding Iraqi security forces, General Kimmitt said.

Multinational Force Iraq "will certainly be involved in the tactical operations, but only to the extent that they have somewhat of an operational and strategic impact on this country," Kimmitt said.

Army Lt. Gen. Ricardo S. Sanchez, current CJTF-7 commander who will head the force, already has been working the strategic issues, and the new command structure will enable him to focus more of his time and energy in that direction, Kimmitt said.

American Forces Press Service

Military develops ways to improve treatment of sexual assault victims

The term sexual assault must be given a universal definition and separated from "harassment" under the Uniformed Code of Military Justice, according to a group developed to improve the treatment of victims.

In February, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld said he was concerned about reports of allegations of sexual assaults on service members deployed to Iraq and Kuwait. He directed a task force to review the treatment and care of victims, and report their findings within 90 days.

It was reported in March that during a 12-month period Army Criminal Investigation Command personnel had investigated 94 allegations of sexual misconduct in the Central Command area. The complaints were not all made by Soldiers, officials said. And not all of those assaulted were women. Also, the perpetrators were not all Soldiers, officials added. Allegations were made against local nationals and members of other services and coalition forces.

After visiting 21 military locations across the Central Command area, overseas and stateside and talking to more than 1,300 individuals, the eight-member task force addressed 35 key findings, made nine broad recommendations and compiled their results in a 99-page report.

"Sexual assault is a crime and has potentially devastating and long-term effects on victims and their units," said Ellen Embrey, the task force integrator during a Pentagon briefing May 13. "We must make sure that the system of reporting, responding and investigating sexual assault is timely and sensitive to victims' needs. Most importantly, leaders have to be committed to making the necessary improvements."

Overall, Embrey said that there were some local commanders who had developed local sexual assault awareness training, but because there was not a DoD-wide policy in place there was no consistency in the programs. Also all the services have robust programs aimed at preventing sexual harassment, they merely mention assault, she added.

For the purpose of the study, the task force defined sexual assault as alleged offenses of rape, forcible sodomy, assault with intent to commit rape or sodomy, indecent assault or an attempt to commit any of these offenses.

To assess where the military stood in taking care of victims and its prevention programs, the task force talked to victims face-to-face or telephonically to find out if the system had failed them, Embrey said. They also talked to victim advocates, professionals, commanders and Soldiers.

The top recommendation from the task force is to establish a single point of accountability for all sexual assault policy matters within DoD so that all services would get the resources needed to develop programs to support sexual assault prevention, reporting and response. For immediate action, another recommendation includes allocating time during the Combatant Commanders Conference, to be held this month, to discuss the findings and recommendations of the report.

Acting Secretary of the Army Les Brownlee directed the establishment of a Sexual Assault Task Force to review the effectiveness of the Army's policies on reporting and addressing allegations of sexual assault. Senior leaders of the Army and other appropriate parties are reviewing the report. When the review is complete, it will be released to the public.

Army News Service

1st ID twins serve together

While it's unconfirmed, two 1st Infantry Division Soldiers may be making history as they support Operation Iraqi Freedom II.

They are, perhaps, the only identical twins to face combat with the 1st Infantry Division since it was assembled in 1917.

Sgts. Leon Franklin Jr. and Levon Franklin reenlisted in a single ceremony May 1 in Tikrit, Iraq.

To his knowledge, Leon Franklin Jr. and his baby brother by seven minutes, Levon, are the sole identical twins assigned to the division as it approaches its ninth decade.

Based at Forward Operating Base Danger in Tikrit, Iraq, Leon oversees the awards section at Division Main. Since March 19, Levon has been at Camp Speicher, which is about 20 minutes away. At the division rear, Levon collects information on the Big Red One's missions.

Perhaps not surprising, the brothers' military careers have paralleled one another. Born on Sept. 1, 1977, to Winnie and Leon Franklin, the twins acknowledge they've always had a close bond, so much so that when Levon joined the Army Reserve in August 1996, Leon followed suit two months later.

Levon said he enjoyed going through basic training with his older brother, who candidly admits that he probably made more of the blunders as he became indoctrinated into military life.

Leon describes himself as an introvert compared to Levon, whom is "more outgoing."

Levon said, "every once in a while we like to play tricks on people who never met us."

For example, he might be at work when his older brother comes to visit. He said his co-workers would marvel at how quickly he could change clothes.

"People my brother knew or knows would come up to me and say, 'Hey Leon, what's up?'" Levon said. "I would tell them I was his twin brother, but they wouldn't actually believe me. I would have to persuade or show them I wasn't lying. It's weird when people say hello to you and you don't even think that you have met them before," he said. "This happens everyday of my life."

After two years in the Reserve, the twins wanted to pursue a fulltime career in the military, so on Dec. 29, 1998, they enlisted in the

active Army. Since their first duty station together at Ft. Polk, La., the twins have had identical duty stations.

Levon likes it because home is never farther than a chat with his big brother.

196th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Soldier reaches 40 years, keeps on serving

For some Soldiers, one enlistment is enough. Others serve 20 years so they can collect retirement benefits. For one Soldier in Mosul, Iraq, however, even 20 years was not enough service.

Col. Gerald Griffin, commander of clinical services and the chief of emergency medical services for the 67th Combat Support Hospital, celebrated service anniversary for 40 years April 12, while deployed to northern Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"Just because I was almost 62, I did not feel decrepit and felt I wasn't finished being a Soldier yet," Griffin said. "It was payback time for all of the privileges I've had in this Army."

Griffin, who retired as a brigadier general, was given another opportunity to serve because of a loophole in the regulations that restrict officers from serving after a certain age. General officers are normally released by age 60 but he received a two-year extension and was required to retire at age 62.

The Surgeon General, who was a guest at Griffin's retirement dinner, said he had overheard that the retirement was not really a retirement and that Griffin was looking for a way to slip around it.

"I found out that colonels can stay until they drop dead or get a walker and being a critical medical specialty as an Army trained emergency room doctor, I could stay until age 67," Griffin said. "The Surgeon General asked how he could help, and I said 'three years in Germany would be nice'."

After some negotiation, Griffin returned to active duty as a colonel and was assigned as an emergency physician with the 67th CSH in Wuerzburg, Germany. However, within six weeks, Griffin deployed for four months to Kosovo and in mid January, he deployed to Iraq with the 67th CSH.

Griffin said he might have the unique characteristic of having been a colonel twice, and after his second retirement, a brigadier general twice.

This deployment is familiar territory for Griffin. He also served in northern Iraq as part of the first Gulf War in 1991, running medical teams for the Kurds with the British Royal Marine commandos.

Griffin began his Army career when he was drafted in September 1963 and trained as a medic. After serving two years active and two years in the Army Reserve, he was discharged and pursued his doctorate degree in pharmacology. He later taught pharmacology as a professor at the University of New Mexico.

In the meantime, he joined the Army. At age 34, Griffin decided to become a physician and went back to medical school.

"One of my biggest challenges was being able to attend medical school while raising three children," Griffin said. "Luckily, I was still serving in the reserves and was eligible for the G.I. Bill, so I was able to get the financial support to pay for school and support my family."

Army News Service



Army Spc. Elizabeth Jarry, a dental hygienist at Balad Air Base, Iraq, shows villagers of all ages how to brush their teeth during a recent Medical Civic Action Project at a small village in Balad.

Troops treat villagers near



As U.S. troops began rapidly setting up a makeshift treatment facility, villagers, including many smiling young children, flocked to the area. The doctors, dentists and technicians gave out toothbrushes, over-the-counter medications, vitamins and basic hygiene items to more than 130 people on the short mission.

By Capt. Catherine Wilkinson
Deputy Public Affairs Officer

Civil affairs and medical personnel from Logistics Support Area Anaconda provided medical assistance to more than 130 residents of a nearby village May 12.

Soldiers and airmen combined forces to provide basic medical care for Bakra Village residents during a Medical Civil Action Project mission. A wide variety of medical professionals including doctors, optometrists, dentists, physical therapists and physician's assistants treated patients during the MEDCAP mission.

Residents began lining up for medical care as soon as the military convoy entered the village. Medics led them into a waiting area to be triaged and directed to the appropriate care provider.

The doctors provided basic medical care, evaluated individual health problems and distributed over-the-counter medicines to assist the villagers. Interpreters played a vital role during the mission, translating patient issues and the doctors' advice into both Arabic and English.

"It's a little overwhelming," said Tech. Sgt. Paula Edwards, a medical technician with the Air Force's Contingency Aeromedical Staging Facility, about the growing crowd that showed up to be

seen by the doctors. ing."

Most of the patients needed routine medical care ranging from high blood pressure, arthritis and ear infections.

"I am surprised at the care they are," said Air Force Major, an administrator with the mission. "The children really seem to be very grateful. The patients are very grateful."

Spc. Elizabeth Jarry, a dental hygienist from the 118th Medical Group, showed more than 100 people how to brush their teeth using techniques. "Prevention is very important. It's not a good start," she said. Most of the patients saw were children under the age of 10.

"I wish I could understand what they could speak back to me," Jarry said. "I relied on hand gestures and demonstrations to teach people how to floss and brush their teeth. It was so popular that I ran out of toothbrushes she was given."

While patients waited outside the building, soldiers from the 81st Air Corps Support Company, 81st Air Battalion and the 81st Air Team provided site security. Young children asking for broken English soon became soldiers. "What is your name? What is your chocolate?" were heard.



PHOTOS BY STAFF SGT. DAVID E. GILLESPIE

Air Force Col. John Cinco, 332nd Contingency Aeromedical Staging Facility flight surgeon at Camp Anaconda, checks an Iraqi girl's eyes during the recent Medical Civic Action Project.

BELOW – Cinco examines another patient, who had complained of abdominal pain and nausea.

r Anaconda

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Maj. Kristina Miller,
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soldiers from the 13th
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security outside.

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name" and "give me
rd frequently as the

soldiers interacted with the children out-
side.

"Every chance I get I try to volunteer
for security. I take a different group of
soldiers with me every time so we can get
out and see what's really going on around
here," said Sgt. 1st Class Patrick Bilon, a
platoon sergeant with Company C, 29th
Signal Battalion.

"It's nice to get out and help the com-
munity and see that these people are
friendly to us."

"It's interesting to interact with the
people and see how attitudes change and
the good that's done," said Col. Nicholas
Zoeller, the 13th Corps Support Com-
mand Assistant Chief of Staff (G5),
describing the good will created by civil
affairs MEDCAP missions.

This MEDCAP mission is one way that
the Coalition Forces are improving the
quality of life for the Iraqi people so that
when the coalition leaves Iraq, the citizens
will have a higher standard of living,
Zoeller said.

"We are making steady uphill progress
in improving quality of life in Iraq," he
added. To further that progress, Zoeller
said he and his 13th COSCOM G5 staff
plan to conduct more MEDCAP missions
in the future.

"I'd love to come here every week,"
Jarry said. "I feel like I'm actually doing
something to help the country."



Sustainer Reel Time Theater

May Movie Schedule

Daily Shows: 3 p.m., 6 p.m., and 9 p.m.
(schedule is subject to change)

May 23

3 p.m. Van Helsing
6 p.m. The Passion of the Christ
9 p.m. The Passion of the Christ

May 24

3 p.m. No Movie
7 p.m. Brickfoot Band
9 p.m. No Movie

May 25

3 p.m. No Movie
7 p.m. Brickfoot Band
9 p.m. No Movie

May 26

3 p.m. The Passion of the Christ
6 p.m. Van Helsing
9 p.m. Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind

May 27

3 p.m. Scooby Doo 2
6 p.m. Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind
9 p.m. Van Helsing



Scooby Doo 2

Weekly Religious Schedule

Anaconda Chapel

(One block west of Mosque at Hawk St. and New Jersey Ave. in Small Chapel Tent)

Friday

1:30 p.m. Islamic Prayer
5 p.m. Jewish Torah Study
6 p.m. Jewish Prayer

Saturday

1 p.m. Choir Practice
(General Protestant)
8:30 p.m. Choir Practice (Gospel)

Sunday

8:30 a.m. Lutheran
10 a.m. Latter Day Saints
7 p.m. Roman Catholic Mass

Sustainer Indoor Theater

Sunday

9 a.m. Protestant (General)
10 a.m. Roman Catholic Mass
11:30 a.m. Protestant (Gospel)

31st Combat Support Hospital Church

(One block north of Turner indoor swimming pool)

Sunday

9:30 a.m. Protestant
Noon Roman Catholic Mass

Air Force Chapel

(Air Force Chapel across from PAX and Redeployment tents)

Sunday

8:45 a.m. Sunday School
10:30 a.m. Contemporary Worship
Noon Roman Catholic Mass
5:30 p.m. Protestant
7 p.m. Latter Day Saints

82nd Airborne Chapel

(Building 4148 south of AAFES Exchange)

Wednesday

7 p.m. Protestant

Saturday

9:30 a.m. Christian Orthodox
7 p.m. Roman Catholic Mass

Sunday

11 a.m. Protestant
7 p.m. Protestant

185th Aviation Group Chapel

(Across from DFAC #4 on Texas Street)

Sunday

8:30 a.m. Roman Catholic Mass
9:30 a.m. Christian Praise
11 a.m. Protestant
2 p.m. Lutheran

MWR Events Calendar for May 21-29

May 23 Jazz Sunday's 'Spoken Word'
7 p.m. in MWR Sports Lounge

May 24 Billiards Tournament
7 p.m. in Recreation Tent

May 25 Billiards Tournament Finals
7 p.m. in Recreation Tent

May 26 Country Music Night
in MWR Sports Lounge

May 27 Hip Hop/R & B Music
in MWR Sports Lounge

May 28 Billiards Tournament
11 a.m. in Recreation Tent

Salsa/Latino Music Night
in MWR Sports Lounge

May 29 Billiards Tournament Finals
11 a.m. in Recreation Tent

'Old School' Music Night
in MWR Sports Lounge

Aerobics Schedule

6 p.m. in MWR Sports Lounge

May 21 Step Aerobics

May 24 Floor Aerobics

May 25 Step Aerobics

May 26 Floor Aerobics

May 28 Step Aerobics





PHOTOS BY SGT ANN VENTURATO

Spc. Heather Bales, Sgt. Andrew Harmon and Sgt. Robert Klein, Soldiers from the 407th Quartermaster Detachment, laugh at one of Bob Perkell's jokes during the afternoon Comics on Duty show May 16.

Comics hit with barrage of laughter

By Sgt. Ann Venturato
Anaconda Times staff writer

The "Comics on Duty" world tour was back again at LSA Anaconda on May 15-16 to treat the service members to a barrel of laughs.

The comics performed three shows at the Sustainer indoor theater in the two days they were here.

"This is actually our fourth appearance here at LSA Anaconda," said Rich Davis, the organizer for the "Comics on Duty" tour.

"We get a chance to go where no one else is willing to go," said Davis. "We have actually toured 54 different sites in Iraq."

Three members of our comedy crew are former members of the armed forces, Davis said. "They got out of the military and decided to make a life of comedy. Now they get to come back and give you a chance to shut down for a couple of hours," Davis said.

For a few of the comedians, like Steve Mazan, this was their first "Comics on Duty" tour.

"It's been a blast," Mazan said. "This is the fourth day of 23 total days on tour, and it is only our second stop on tour."

All of the comedians enjoyed entertaining the

service members.

"It's rewarding, you get a different level of appreciation that you don't get in comedy," Mazan said.

Like Mazan, this is also comedian Jeffrey Steele's first tour with the "Comics on Duty" tour.

"I really enjoy doing tours," Steele, who has 30 years experience at stunt work and doing magic tricks.

The comedy show was a hit with both the audience and the comedians themselves.

Their first show on the evening of May 15 was packed and there was standing room only in the theater.

Service members were busting out with laughter with each joke the comics told.

"I enjoyed it. It was extremely funny, and I hope to get a chance to see them again before I leave," said Staff Sgt. Terry King, a Soldier with the 334th Signal Company.

Service members who went to the final show on the evening of May 16 were able to see the

comedians do a little improvisation while waiting for the all clear alarm to sound.

All of the comedians were happy to get a chance to be part of the "Comics on Duty" tour and help support the armed forces.



The comics were issued protective gear, further demonstrating that they were going where few comics had gone before.



One of the comics even joked about the dangerously sharp spoons at the dining facilities.

"Thank you guys for coming out and doing what you do," said comedian Bob Perkell at the beginning of his comedy routine.

The "Comics on Duty" tour are scheduled to continue their tour by visiting other troops in the Persian Gulf region.

Security detail trains in self defense

By Sgt. Ann Venturato
Anaconda Times assistant editor

Staff Sgt. Martin Oviedo, the sergeant in charge of the personal security detail for Col. James E. Chambers, the 13th Corps Support Command commander, is one of five Soldiers who received defense tactics training from Master Sgt. Renee Merrick, the Corps Distribution Center battle sergeant May 16.

The five Soldiers are all part of the personal security detail for Chambers.

With 10 years of martial arts training, a certified instructor's certificate in defense tactics and a civilian job as a Travis County Sheriff's Deputy in Texas, Merrick was the best person to seek training from to hone self-defense skills and get additional practice, Oviedo said.

"I asked her if she wouldn't mind filling in some of our down time in by teaching us some hand-to-hand combat skills. Help us hone our skills. She was all for it. She said sure, she loved doing it. We decided to go with Sundays because that was her slowest day and it fit in her schedule," Oviedo said.

They began training last spring.

"We were doing it every Sunday for a while, but since it has gotten real busy it's been kind of hard getting together again," Merrick said.

Merrick takes training her students seriously.

"I have actually made them (her students) kind of nervous. Every time I am around them they kind of back up a bit," said Merrick.

"Because if they aren't paying attention I hit them. I think they're more alert now," said Merrick.

"I am 46 years old and I don't think they really thought I was quick. I taught them a little bit of respect," she said. "You don't have to be real strong as long as you are quick and you're accurate."

"We talked about basic things like being alert, talked about body positioning. I showed them some real basic takedowns to get somebody on the ground quickly. I showed them some motor

nerve points that you can hit on the body and that can cause somebody to either fall down or knock them out," Merrick said.

Merrick and her students have done a lot of hands-on practice to get the moves down right.

"It is always good to get hands on and get down and dirty. Because you never know how a move is going to work unless you go through the full range of motions," Oviedo said. "It gives us a mindset that we can use in situations."

When it came to demonstrating some of the moves, Merrick wasn't afraid to get right to point, the nerve point.

"When I was showing them the motor nerve points, I would actually hit them there so they would know how it felt like. I wouldn't hit them very hard though," said Merrick.

It wasn't long before Oviedo and the other students in her class had the basic moves down.

"Once we started getting the basics down, we started doing it with full gear. Just to see how it would feel doing it with all the gear on," Oviedo said. "It helps out to know that certain moves you can't use wearing all the gear."

According to Merrick there is a lot more than just knowing the right moves when trying to disarm someone.

"A lot of times you have guys that think it is just hitting somebody in the head. You need to know where to hit somebody. You can't just slug somebody because you may or may not hurt them, but if you know where to hit, where it is going really hurt somebody, you can cause a lot more damage and incapacitate them," Merrick said.

Merrick had a lot of knowledge to give to Oviedo and her other students.

"She also brought a lot of real circumstances of where she had to use it and that also helped give us a mental note of when to use it and how to use it. The size of the somebody doesn't really matter in a confrontation," Oviedo said.

"Hand-to-hand combat plays a big role in our jobs and a lot of times people out in the village they get really close to Chambers and our job is to know what to do, know how to react to certain situations and scenarios, and close-quarters combat plays a big part of our jobs," Oviedo said. "The more hand-to-hand stuff that we know, the more tools we have in our tool belt, help us react properly in different close-quarters situations."

"Our main focus is the CG, Col. James Chambers. We are his protective service detail. Our main goal is to escort him in convoys to nonsecure sites," Oviedo said. "Which means we go where he goes."



PHOTO BY SGT. ANN VENTURATO
Master Sgt. Renee Merrick demonstrates the use of motor nerve points on Staff Sgt. Martin Oviedo during one of their Sunday training sessions.



Hand-to-hand combat is an important part of the job for the security force, and their martial arts training helps hone their skills.

Depending on the situation, a lot of times we are required to either use hand-to-hand techniques to keep people behind and to keep people away from the commander, Oviedo said.

"We're not always going to engage the enemy by firing at them," Oviedo said. "It is good to know some less than lethal hand-to-hand combat moves."

Defense tactics are used to neutralize threats.

"I tell them, 'you have to have a little bit of control about what you are doing.' There are a lot of ways you can throw somebody to the ground without having it look like you just picked them up and body slammed them," Merrick said.

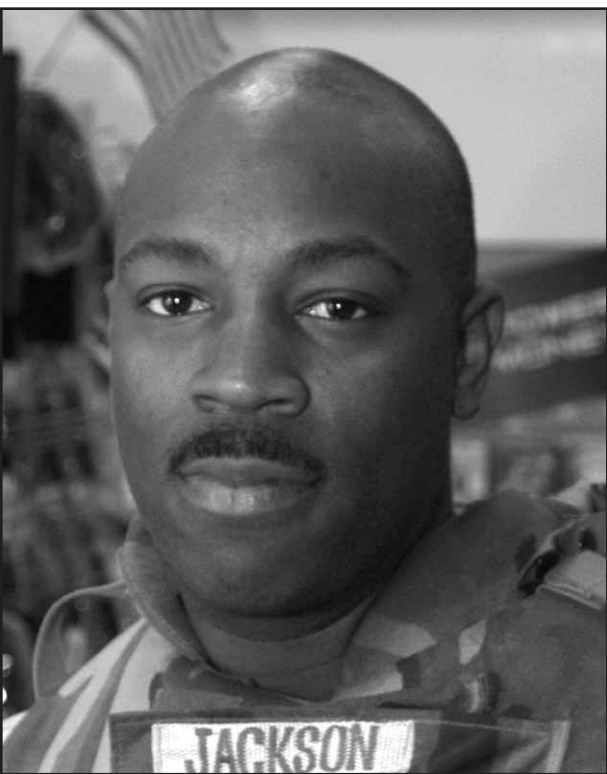
"Most of the stuff is real simple. I am not teaching them to how be martial arts experts. I am teaching them real quick things that are really easy to remember. If you have five or six things you are really good at and practiced real well, you are going to be twice as effective than if you knew thousands of techniques, when the adrenaline is flowing you are only going to remember four or five techniques anyway," Merrick said.

"Once you decide to put your hands on somebody, you better give 150 percent and do it quickly," said Merrick.

Merrick is not looking for any more students to teach.

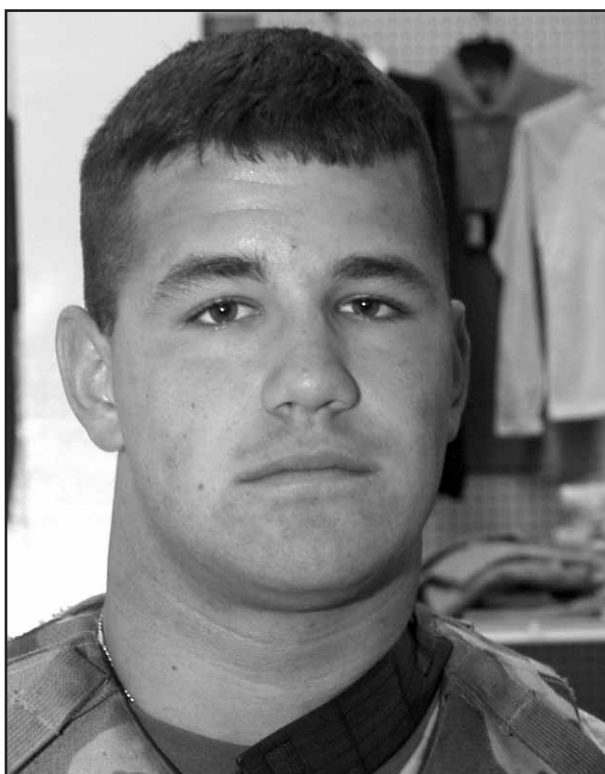
QUESTION OF THE WEEK

"What would you like to see in a care package?"



Capt. Keefe Jackson
3625th Maintenance Co.

"I'd like to receive redeployment orders, a home cooked meal, a video teleconference with my family, a BBQ grill and the opportunity for all of my soldiers to take R&R leave."



Cpl. Andy Plonski
6th ESB, USMC

"In my dream care package I'd like a case of Coors Lite, a grill, my car, my TV and my big orange couch."



Sgt. Eugenia Kessler
244th CAB

"I'd like to receive the beach, a queen-size bed, a foot spa, a seafood restaurant and my kids."



Sgt. David Bendfeldt
933rd MP Co.

"I'd like to get a plane ticket home, a cushy job, an air conditioner, a building instead of a tent to live in and a new girlfriend."



Maj. Kristi Hilton
4th CMMC

"I like a big hug, a big thing of chocolate and my three kids!"



Sgt. 1st Class Grey Millard
246th EN

"I'd just like a few DVDs and an air conditioner."

2ID brigade deploying from Korea

By Jim Garamone
Army News Service

About 3,600 Soldiers of the 2nd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division will deploy to Iraq this summer from the Republic of Korea, Defense Department officials said May 17.

The deployment will reduce U.S. troop strength in Korea by about 10 percent. This reduction decision can be made with impunity, a senior DoD official said speaking on background, because of the beefed-up capabilities the United States has on the Korean peninsula.

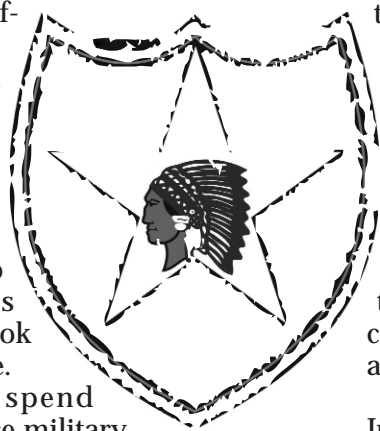
More capable air assets, a Patriot-3 brigade, rotating Stryker battalions, and far better command, control, computers, communications and intelligence facilities more than make up for the drop of U.S. troops in South Korea to 34,000, the official said.

"Ongoing global posture review is strengthening our position in Asia and Korea," said Richard Lawless, deputy defense undersecretary for Asia-Pacific policy. "This strengthened global and regional posture, including our efforts under way in Korea to realign U.S. forces and enhance our capabilities, allows us to employ our forces worldwide in a more flexible manner."

Lawless said that if needed, the United States can quickly augment air and naval presence in the Asia-Pacific region.

Officials said Korean and Japanese leaders were informed of and agreed with the U.S. decision send the 2nd Brigade, 2ID to Iraq. They said it is part of the overall look at U.S. global posture.

The troops will spend one year in Iraq. Since military tours of Korea are typically one-year unac-



Soldiers of the 2nd Infantry Division, shimmy up rope obstacles under the watchful eye of Army Ranger instructors in a South Korean training area.

PHOTO BY HU SON YU

panied tours, some soldiers will spend up to two years separated from their families. Officials said the majority will spend between 12 and 18 months away from home. No decision has been made on whether the brigade will return to Korea following its tour of duty in Iraq.

A senior military official said the troops are fully combat ready, and that this will allow the stress to be "balanced" throughout the force. He said DoD also is looking at changing the tour length of Marine forces assigned to Iraq.

Currently, Marines spend seven months in Iraq and seven months home.

Troops of the 2nd Brigade, 2ID, now sta-

tioned near the demilitarized zone in Korea, will begin deploying to Iraq in mid-summer, a senior DoD official said.

The 3rd Brigade of the 2nd ID, also known as the Stryker Brigade Combat Team, has been in northern Iraq since early this year.

The SBCT deployed to Iraq from its home base of Fort Lewis, Wash., in November. The brigade became part of "Task Force Olympia" early this year and took over operational control of northern Iraqi provinces Feb. 5 from the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) in Mosul.

This summer's deployment of the 2nd Brigade will place two of 2nd Infantry Division's three brigades in Iraq. The 1st Brigade of the 2ID will remain in Korea.

Army suggestion program goes online

By Joe Burlas
Army News Service

Soldiers and Department of the Army civilians can now go online to offer Army suggestions -- and possibly win some cash.

The Army Suggestion Program, <https://armsuggestions.army.mil>, went online May 17. Logging on requires an Army Knowledge Online user name and password.

While there are several advantages to an Army central online program, the biggest plus is anyone with access to the Web can make a suggestion in a timely manner -- no matter where they are, said Brenda Scott, a Suggestion Program official with the

Office of the Chief of Staff Strategic Management and Innovations Division.

In the past, deployed Soldiers who came up with good ideas when away from home station would often wait to submit that idea through channels until they returned home, Scott said. The reasons for the wait, she said, were several: getting a copy of Army Regulation 5-17 that outlines submission requirements, keeping the hardcopy submission form clean in the field while filling it out and lack of research resources.



"We have more than 100,000 Soldiers deployed overseas right now and thousands more DA civilians with them,"

Scott said. "Any one of them with a suggestion can now go online and submit their ideas without fear of getting the paperwork dirty, and there are links on the page that give lots of research material."

The site also has a link to AR 5-17.

There is even a save function that allows suggestors to fill out the submission packet over a period of time rather than during just one session.

The program seeks suggestions that improve work methods, materials, processes, equipment, logistics, utilities or tools that will benefit the Army. Implemented suggestions that save the Army money are often eligible for a cash award. The more money saved, the larger the potential award.

The suggestion must present a problem or situation, propose a solution and state the benefit to the government.

The new Website also allows supervisors to nominate a suggestor for recognition as the top suggestor of the year in Soldier and DA civilian categories during the annual Secretary of the Army Awards ceremony.



PHOTOS BY PFC. ABEL TREVINO

Sgt. Eddie Morris concentrates as he visualizes his next shot in a game of billiards at the MWR Recreation tent near the AAFES Exchange on LSA Anaconda.

Billiard tent offers different, 'normal' entertainment

By Pfc. Abel Trevino
Anaconda Times staff writer

Jonathon J. Spatig started shooting pool roughly 30 years ago, so it was no surprise that by the 21st game of pool that night, he was already winning 14-6 against his young friend and competitor William Wallace.

There were no stakes on the line, or even a tournament being played, just a group of Soldiers relaxing in the Morale, Welfare, and Recreation billiards tent after another long day at LSA Anaconda May 17.

"[Pool] is a nice relaxing game. It helps to relieve the tension of what we're doing here and the mortar attacks and stuff," Spatig said.

"Pool is a fun game, it's kind of relaxing but sometimes you can take out your aggression too," Wallace said.

On that night, over a dozen people were participating in the same recreational relaxation technique.

"[Billiards] is a way to get away from the everyday mundane boredom," said Ramona Tate, a player for almost 20 years.

"[Being here] gives me a chance to take a break from everything and let's me be normal," she said.

Harold Greaves, her competitor and a billiards player for about three years, said that pool was a relaxing sport.

Greaves played a remarkable game but didn't follow it up as Tate defeated him, while he still had six balls on the table, demonstrating how experience pays off in pool. She modestly attributed the win to his kindness – adding that he had let her win.

On another table a fierce competition took place between Phuan Nguyen and Minh Pham.

Nguyen, a player for only a year, said that his enjoyment in the sport derived from another factor in good billiards players: geometry.

Nguyen also placed his thumb on the pulse of the tent when he said that billiards was a great way to pass the time since at that time of night there weren't many other options for entertainment.

"Some people enjoy things like this. It's a good time but a lot of people don't come out," he said.

Being in the center of a combat zone could tend to keep some people in

the safety of covered buildings but for Spatig, the possibility of mortars really didn't scare him.

"Mortar attacks don't really bother me," he said. "I feel really safe being here."

The general thought was that sports can make any deployment more tolerable.



Incorporating geometry into the game of pool, the angle of the cue ball and the pool stick should sink the two-ball combination in the corner pocket.



Morris prepares for his next shot on one of the tent's six billiards tables.

"[The MWR tent] is so relaxing, it reminds me of being home," Wallace said. "It feels good to be here, and forget I'm in Iraq for a few minutes."

Wallace added that he would encourage people to come in and shoot a few rounds to relax, that billiards improved morale a great deal, and allowed people to take their minds off their problems and days for a while.



Petty Officer 1st Class Jody White, a first class equipment operator with the 528th U.S. Navy POL Support, pushes builds up the walls of a fuel berm using a bulldozer May 12 at the Logistical Support Area Anaconda fuel depot.

PHOTOS BY PFC LEAH R. BURTON

From seas to sand: U.S. Navy in Iraq

By Pfc. Leah R. Burton
Anaconda Times staff writer

The U.S. Navy's presence in Iraq may have puzzled people or raised a few eyebrows but the 528th U.S. Navy Petroleum, Oil and Lubricants Support arrived at LSA in February.

Prior to deploying, the unit underwent some training in preparation for anything they might encounter.

"We went to Williamsburg, Va., where our headquarters is located, and had a basic course in combat skills and crew served weapon skills from the Marines at Quantico, Va.," said Lt. James Jensen the unit's administration, supply and weapons officer.

The U.S. Navy Reserve unit is composed of four battalions: Navy Cargo Handling Battalion 9, NCHB 11, NCHB 14 and Navy Supply Support Battalion 1.

The service members are based across the American southwest, from California to Florida, and each company has sailors from all across the country, said Petty Officer 1st Class Kenneth G. Schmidt, electronics technician.

Although most of the sailors of the 528th USN POL Support didn't know each other before this deployment, they've become a cohesive, tight-knit unit, said Schmidt.

"We're a really diverse unit with some really diverse folks. That diversity has made us capable of performing any mission that's come up. That's what makes us an incredible team," Schmidt said.

Sailors from the 528th USN POL Support hold civilian jobs stateside as law enforcement officers, corrections officers, students, opticians and nurses among other occupations. Most are former active duty Marines or Soldiers, who were eager to get to Iraq.

"I was actually irritated that the U.S. was having a war, and I wasn't participating. Not that



Petty Officer 3rd Class Francisco J. Marquez-Haro, a builder with the 528th U.S. Navy POL Support, lowers and smooths the top of a fuel berm with a rake May 12 at the Logistical Support Area Anaconda fuel depot.

I'm a war junkie, but there's a reason why we're here," Schmidt said.

The dryness, heat and sand are a far cry from the claustrophobic interior of a submarine, said Jensen.

"This is a lot different than most of the people here are used to. It's more dangerous but it's better than being on a ship. My ship was 567 feet long and 65 feet wide and that's as far as you

could go for as long as you're out there," Jensen said.

The majority of the sailors of the 528th USN POL Support are fuel handlers maintaining the LSA Anaconda fuel depot and rebuilding damaged and substandard fuel berms.

The fuel handlers are often uncomfortably close to the impact area of some mortar attacks, said Petty Officer 1st Class Gerard M. Moore, operations supervisor at the fuel depot.

The sailors have also had some dangerous encounters during their combat logistics patrols. "We had an [improvised explosive device] thrown into our convoy by an 8-year-old boy. That same convoy took small arms fire from a building," Schmidt said.

Fortunately, they have experienced no casualties since their arrival here. They did, however, have some minor equipment damage during an attack on a convoy.

With the grim realities of combat upon them, the sailors found constructive ways to alleviate some stress.

"We work out either at the gym, or we also have some weights and stuff we just received," Schmidt said. "We also read books, watch movies and give each other a hard time. It helps that we all like what we're doing. What we're doing is interesting, not monotonous or boring,"

Correspondence and care packages also serve to boost unit morale.

"Lots of care packages come in. I think all of us have received mail and most of us share everything that comes in. It reminds us of home. It's good to remember home, remember why we do what we do. The little blond kid that runs around the corner screaming, 'Daddy. Daddy. Daddy.' That's why we do this," Schmidt said.

The sailor seen sprinkled here and there at LSA Anaconda are doing the same things that other service members are doing: trying to make life better in Iraq in their own way for Americans, coalition forces and Iraqis alike.